



# U.S. Congressman Mike Pence

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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **PENCE OPPOSES SHAYS-MEEHAN BILL**

#### ***Campaign finance bill bans free speech before elections***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Mike Pence today spoke on the House Floor, at the request of Majority Whip Tom DeLay, in opposition to the campaign finance reform bill introduced by Reps. Chris Shays and Marty Meehan.

“I strongly oppose the Shays-Meehan bill principally because of the oath of office that I took a little over a year ago,” said Pence. “That oath of office charged me with upholding and defending the Constitution of the United States of America. James Madison, the father of the Constitution, penned these very simple words: ‘Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech.’

“Last night I was involved in debate on this bill, and when I returned to our home in the Washington area, my ten-year old son, who had just finished his first unit in his civics class on the Constitution of the United States, told me, ‘Dad, you were right! I just read that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech.’

“The Supreme Court agreed with me, and with my son, when it recently said that First Amendment activity applies no less to independent expression by individuals or political committees than it does to political parties. The truth of the matter is that Shays-Meehan bars individuals and organizations from their First Amendment rights for two months prior to an election.

“It is my hope that we can reform campaign finance, and close loopholes allowing ‘soft money’ contributions to political parties. In fact, tonight I will support an amendment to ban all soft money from the election process, which Shays-Meehan does not do. I will also vote to ban the use of soft money for constructing political party buildings or paying off debt.

“The Shays-Meehan bill is good for incumbents, bad for democracy; good for bureaucracy, bad for liberty, and Members of this House should oppose it,” said Pence.